

**Williams Valley School District
Athletic Department
Resocialization of Sports Recommendations**

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The WVSD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. The WVSD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

****This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.**

PROCEDURES

Current protocols for **ALL PHASES** for Junior and Senior High workouts.

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check. Temperatures at 100.4 or higher will be sent home.
2. Only essential personnel are permitted to attend workouts, including approved paid or volunteer coaches, Athletic Trainer, school staff. Non-essential visitors, spectators, or parents are prohibited. Team workouts with external groups or organizations are also prohibited.
3. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap). Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
4. All adult staff (coaches, trainers, etc.) must wear masks or face coverings at all times, unless doing so jeopardizes their health. Face coverings are required to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing, but will be worn by those not actively participating.
5. Intensified cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities. Athletic equipment must be cleaned after each use. **Wrestling mats must be cleaned before and after each use.** Weight room equipment must be wiped down after each individual use. **Locker rooms will not be utilized for team gatherings. Locker room use will be limited to: players needing to be taped,**

players needing to use the restroom, or players needing to put on game equipment. Weigh ins for Wrestling may be conducted in an open area of the locker room, with students socially distancing as much as possible. High touch areas (door handles, bathrooms, sinks) need to be cleaned after each workout.

6. Social distancing will occur through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
7. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will be educated on health and safety protocols
8. Anyone who is sick is required to stay home.
9. Plans are in place should a student or employee get sick, **including following Dept. of Health recommendations regarding contact tracing.**
10. Regular communication will occur, along with monitoring developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
11. Athletes and Coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared. Water coolers, cups, school fountains, or water buffalos will not be used.
12. Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
13. Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during or after games and practices. Limit unnecessary physical contact with teammates, other athletes, coaches, and other essential personnel.
14. Athletes will be prohibited from sharing certain sports equipment or apparel.
15. Mandated staggered drop off locations and/or start/end times of practices, games, or meetings.
16. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments.
17. If there is a concern that someone is immunocompromised, or has any concern regarding their risk in terms of participation in sports and activities, they should consult their health care provider prior to returning to sports.

MASK ORDER

Everyone who participates in sport activities including coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception in Section 3 of the Order.

Indoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings, when indoors and where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, etc.

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings if they cannot maintain sustained physical distance from persons outside of their household. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. If sustained six-foot distancing can be maintained, face coverings may be removed when outdoors.

The order provides an exception in section 3 that provides that if wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability. The order indicates all alternatives to wearing a face covering, including the use of a face shield, should be exhausted before an individual is excepted from this Order.

Using football as an example, wearing a mask in addition to a mouth guard and a helmet would likely create a medical issue for the athlete whether the athlete is a professional or youth player even if a previous medical issue was not present. For example, the CDC says that "wearing a mask with these types of protective equipment is not safe if it makes it hard to breathe." There are other sports where there are similar concerns that a mask would create a medical issue where one would otherwise not exist in an athlete. For example, it should also be obvious that wearing a mask while swimming presents an imminent health issue.

According to Section 3, the athlete would be asked to work through alternatives that would reduce or eliminate the respiratory droplets that would impact others in proximity. If the sport, equipment, or exertion level does not allow for face covering to be worn safely then the athlete should not wear a face covering.

There are no exemptions for specific sports, leagues, teams, or levels. We know that some people don't like masks. We are asking everyone to please give this their best effort so we can continue these activities and others as we all unite to fight COVID-19.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPORTS

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. Examples: football, wrestling, cheerleading (stunts), dance

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. Examples: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. Examples: running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, weightlifting, sideline cheer

PHASES OF PARTICIPATION

PHASE 1 (PA State Red)

Team Activities: No In-person gatherings allowed, Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.), Athletes may participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.

- All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
- Athletes and Coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Phase 2 (PA State Yellow)

Team Activities may include: team meetings, open gym, kick around, weight training/conditioning, running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, and sideline cheer, etc.

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and students receive MANDATORY screening for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check. (See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
- Responses to screening questions for each person will be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19
- Any person with a positive screen reported will not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional. Written documentation from health care provider will be required to resume activity.
- Team attendance will be recorded.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than (25 Yellow) individuals per group including coaches and athletes per scheduled field/court. The facility as a whole may not exceed 50% of its' total occupancy as permitted by law.
- Controlled non-contact practices only, modified game rules.
- Social Distancing of 6 feet must be applied during practices, team meetings, and gathering areas.
- Athletes not actively involved in practice should also be wearing a face mask.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often.
- Weight Room Equipment MUST be wiped down after an individual's use.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces.

Physical Activity:

- Practices must remain non-contact and include social distancing.
- Students must refrain from sharing clothing/towels and must be washed after each practice, including pinnies.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary.
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow.
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar.
- **Masks must be worn at all times by coaches and athletes, whether actively participating or not, unless the person falls under the section 3 exemption.**

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water coolers, water fountains, water cows, water troughs, etc.) should not be utilized

PHASE 3 (PA State Green)

Team activities may include: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football, etc.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- All coaches and students receive MANDATORY screening for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check. (See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
- Responses to screening questions for each person will be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19
- Any person with a positive screen reported will not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional. Written documentation from health care provider will be required to resume activity.
- Team attendance will be recorded.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than (250 Green) individuals per group including coaches and athletes per scheduled field/court. The facility as a whole may not exceed 50% of its' total occupancy as permitted by law.
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often.
- Weight Room Equipment MUST be wiped down after and individual's use.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Low, Moderate, and High Risk practices and Low and Moderate Risk competitions may begin (As per State, Local, and PIAA Guidelines)
- Students must refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but MUST be cleaned after every practice/event.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the state of Pennsylvania may work with relevant entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, and/or spring seasons.

Transportation:

Modifications for student/coach transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary. This may include:

- Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van
- Social distancing on a bus

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench – appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench during contests and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state and local governments. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

Who should be allowed at events?

Group people into tiers from essential to non-essential and decide which will be allowed at an event:

1. Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security
 2. Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
 3. Tier 3 (Non-essential) – Spectators, vendors
- Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state/local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
 - Changes to seating capacity and social distancing may be necessary for each venue facility and will be determined as more recommendations are released by the local/state governments.

Overnight/Out of State Events/ Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

- The WVSD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high risk exposure.

POSITIVE CASES AND COACHES, STAFF, OR ATHLETES SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix). Symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills (100.4 or High)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Testing

- If you elect to get a COVID-19 test you must self-isolate until the results of those test are in.

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you are infected with the virus, STAY AT HOME. It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, athletic trainer, coach)
- It will be determined if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and /or monitored for symptoms
- If a Positive case of COVID-19 is diagnosed, Contact Tracing will be implemented with the assistance of local health professionals and the CDC/PA DOH. See Information in Appendix.

What to do if a student or staff become ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?

- Every effort will be made to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event
- If student, parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up
- Ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction

Return of student or staff to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis?

- Student or staff should have medical clearance from their physician or appropriate healthcare professional, determined to be non-contagious:
Fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), no vomiting or diarrhea.

EDUCATION

Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls):

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.)
- No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging), etc.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document.
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.
- Students should come dressed for activity.
- Limit indoor activities and the areas used. Locker room use is not permitted. Facility showers cannot be used.
- Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
- No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer.

APPENDIX

Activities' Health Screening

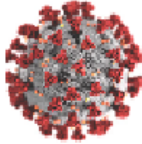
To Be Completed Before Each
Team Event



Or Go To:

tinyurl.com/WVActivityScreening

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



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cdc.gov/coronavirus

BACKGROUND

Contact tracing is the process of reaching out to anyone who came into close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing helps monitor close contacts for symptoms and to determine if they need to be tested. Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- In contact tracing, public health staff work with a case to help them recall everyone they have had close contact with during the time they were infectious.
- Public health staff then inform individuals who have had close contact (e.g. “close contacts”) that they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts are only told that they may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; they are not told who may have exposed them.
- Close contacts are given education, information and support so they understand their risk. They receive information on what they should do to separate themselves from others who have not been exposed, how to monitor themselves for illness, and are made aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Close contacts will be asked to quarantine themselves and are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their infectious period, which is about 14 days, in case they become sick. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice a day and watch for any other symptoms of COVID-19. Public health staff will check in with these contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let public health staff know. The close contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care. A test may be necessary unless the individual is already in a household or long-term care facility with a confirmed case, then the close contact would be considered a probable case without a test.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO CONTACT TRACING?

- A **case** is a patient who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A case should isolate themselves, meaning they should stay away from other people who are not sick to avoid spreading the illness.
- A **close contact** is an individual who had close contact with a case while the case was infectious. A close contact should quarantine themselves, meaning they should stay at home to limit community exposure and self-monitor for symptoms.
- A **contact of a close contact** is an individual who had or continues to have contact with a close contact. A contact of a close contact should take all regular preventative actions, like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces frequently. A contact of a close contact should be alert for symptoms.

RESOURCES:

Hollidaysburg Area School District Athletic Department Resocialization of Sports Recommendations

North Schuylkill Area School District Athletic Department Resocialization of Sports Recommendations

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities (per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

“What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”,
“Schools Decision Tree”

PA Department of Health

Website: [health.pa.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov)

“Coronavirus Symptoms”

“What is Contact Tracing”

“Phased Reopening Plan by Governor Wolf”

A Guide to Re-Entry to Athletics in Texas Secondary Schools

By Jamie Woodall, MPH, LAT, ATC, CPH and Josh Woodall Med, LAT, ATC

Winter Sports Return to Competition Guidelines PIAA

http://www.piaa.org/assets/web/documents/Return_to_Competition_Winter.pdf

Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes and the Public

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>

Mask Order

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Universal-Masking-FAQ.aspx>

Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/restaurant-industry-guidance/>